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COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

SUBJECT Comments on the 1946 and 1947 Harvests

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Retrospective report for the food year 1 July 1946 - 30 June 1947

1. The following were the estimated deliveries for 1946/47:

Grain	2,650,000 tons (of which 20% were oats and barley)
Potatoes	5,600,000 "
Sugar	450,000 "
Meat	110,000 "
Vegetable oil	12,000 "
Animal fats	9,000 "
Milk	1,300,000 liters, incl. milk for butter production.
Butter	10,000 tons.

2. Although the 1946 harvest attained only about 65% of the average pre-war level, the quotas for the above deliveries were so strictly enforced that they were met to the following extent:

Grain 95%, potatoes 96%, sugar beets 90%, milk 98%, meat 100%.

The result, however, of the rigorous collections was that there was a shortage of cattle fodder and seeds and insufficient bread grain for the farmers themselves. It should be noted that all families engaged in agriculture in the Russian zone go without food cards and must subsist on the free margins: i.e. what is left after the obligatory deliveries. This has led to the touching of food reserves and the necessity of issuing food cards to some peasants. Seed reserves and fodder reserves have also been drawn upon.

3. The allocation of seed for grain and potatoes was inadequate in the spring. Altogether, about 50,000 tons of grain and 300,000 tons of potatoes had to be loaned against undertakings to return these to the seed stocks obtained for the 1947 crops. Nevertheless, allocations were frequently belated, especially in the case of potatoes, so that a normal yield cannot be expected - the more so since no attention was paid to sorting. If these disadvantageous consequences are for the moment disregarded, it will be seen that the forecasts made one year ago were on the whole correct: i.e., with a net yield of about 2,400,000 tons of bread grain, and requirements of the population being from 1,600,000 to 1,700,000 tons on the basis of current ration allowances, there remained 700,000 - 800,000 tons for Russian use.

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4. The potato surplus of about 1,200,000 tons is accounted for (apart from what is being taken by the occupation forces) by the manufacture of alcohol, starch, etc. The German population had had quite inadequate quantities of potatoes during the spring months, partly because the 100 kg per head stock for the winter was used up too soon, causing only a partial meeting of the ration in the spring. The sugar surplus of about 300,000 tons for the last year was again exported to Russia. Other foodstuffs have not been sent to Russia in large quantities, and this is particularly true of animal products. The occupation troops are still being provisioned from German produce. Vegetable seeds were exported in large quantities from Saxony-Anhalt. This consisted not only of exports from current production, but also of the stocks of the large seed cultivators.

The 1947 Crop.

5. The sowing plan which forms the basis of the 1947 harvest deals with the pre-war acreages for the five Länder of the Russian Zone, and thus pays no attention to the different structure of the 500,000 "Neubauern" farms created out of the former large estates. In comparison with 1946, bread grains and vegetables are to be extended at the cost of feeders. Potato and sugar beet acreages remain the same. The sowing plans are allocated by the agricultural departments of the *Landesregierungen* to the individual *Kreise*, by the *Kreis* authorities to the *Gemeinden*, and by the *Gemeinde* authorities to the individual farms. Although this entails great hardship, the individual farms are thereby allocated the deliveries which they will have to make, not according to their capacity, but according to theoretical figures resulting from the division of the total demands for a large area. Only in the event of catastrophes (floods, winter damage, etc.) may substitutes be planted.
6. Because of the great difficulties met in the seed distribution in the spring of 1947, the sowing plan could not be fulfilled as desired. The figures for the supplementary sowings in June are not yet at hand, but it is fairly certain that 95% of the grain acreage and 80-85% of the potato acreage has been sown. The land not sown for grain and potatoes owing to the seed shortage is not fallow but has largely been planted with other crops. There was to be a big increase in the vegetable acreage, but because of the inexperience of the growers crops well under average are anticipated.
7. The crop prospects for 1947 are not good. The yields will be rather below those of 1946, and in the most favorable event both grain and potatoes will hardly exceed 55 to 60% of normal pre-war crops. Apart from the difficulties in sowing, the weather has had a bad influence. In wide regions rainfall was only 40% of normal, especially so in Saxony, which is the greatest producing area. The harvesting of rye and winter barley was in full swing three weeks early.
8. Especially grave is the potato situation in the areas suffering from drought, since many plants are dying. Great efforts are being made to obtain healthy seed potatoes, but transport problems are interfering. Because of the late start in growth as a result of the drought and the poor condition of the fields, a normal crop cannot be expected.
9. There will also be great difficulties with the hay crop and with other raw feeding materials. Draught animals were in poor condition last year and are no better now.

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10. The supply of chemical fertilizers is better than it was last year. Potash fertilizers are plentiful and nitrogen fertilizers have been duly allocated and delivered. As foreseen, a total of 60,000 tons of pure nitrogen were available. A doubling of the production of nitrogen fertilizers is contemplated for 1947-1948, which amounts to two-thirds of pre-war production.

Animal Industries

11. While the system of quotas for agricultural products, especially grain and potatoes, has led to hardships and a reduction of future capacity, it has been successful in regard to animal produce. The quota is sufficiently elastic to be adaptable to changing circumstances and in practice demands no more than the natural increase, provided, of course, that the fodder situation is satisfactory. The cattle population has, therefore, not shrunk in relation to that of 1946. In the case of horned cattle and pigs there has even been a slight increase. The following table gives comparative figures in the Russian Zone for 1943 and 1947:

<u>Table.</u>	<u>1943.</u>	<u>1947.</u>	<u>Percentage of 1943.</u>
Horses	721,621	646,576	89%
Horned cattle	3,569,225	2,763,478	77%
(of which cows total	1,940,904	1,365,538	70%)
Pigs	4,035,372	1,966,787	48%
Sheep	1,819,309	747,560	41%

12. It must be borne in mind, however, that the age of the horses is higher and their weight lower. The number of sheep is on the decrease, since the "Neubauern" estates are not suited for rearing them. In order to provide the "Neubauern" with the necessary animals, a 60% increase of cattle is required, and this cannot possibly be achieved under present conditions. The dropping yields of agriculture are caused not only by lack of seeds, drought, and the unsuitability of the estates of some 30% of the "Neubauern" but also by the lack of manure, which again is the result of the decrease in animals.

System of deliveries and estimated yield.

13. The system for the collection of agricultural products for the food year commencing 1 July 1947 is again based on definite quotas. As before, the quotas are in proportion to the size of the estates. The main fault is that the quotas were fixed before the crop prospects could be judged. It was also impossible to obtain permission for the establishment of a scale according to which one product could be delivered instead of another one. Without such a scale, the system lacks elasticity. The quotas for 1947 are calculated so that, if they are fulfilled 100%, the yield will equal that of last year.
14. If the quotas are strictly adhered to, the productive capacity for next year will be impaired. Preliminary crop estimates and threshing yields already show that in many districts the delivery quotas will not be fulfilled, so that the question of how the peasants and the cattle will be adequately fed has not been solved.

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